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EXILES

WORLD TOUR

HEROES REBORN

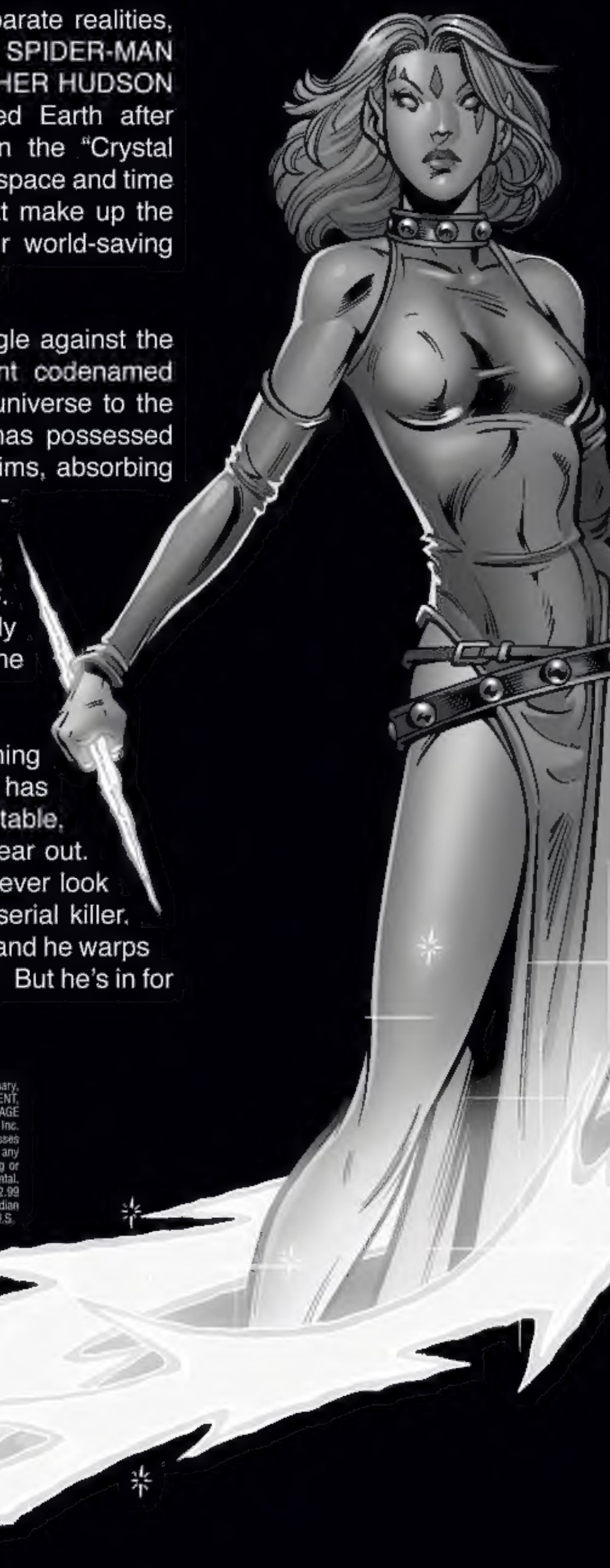
J.Calafiore & MMCK -06

Previously in EXILES:

Gathered together from their own separate realities, BLINK, SABRETOOTH, LONGSHOT, SPIDER-MAN 2099, POWER PRINCESS and HEATHER HUDSON risk their lives to save one imperiled Earth after another. From their headquarters in the "Crystal Palace"—an alien observatory outside space and time overlooking the countless realities that make up the Multiverse—the Exiles undertake their world-saving missions and often pay a terrible price.

Such is the case with their epic struggle against the body-snatching, reality-warping mutant codenamed PROTEUS. Able to travel from one universe to the next under his own power, Proteus has possessed the bodies of a series of powerful victims, absorbing their memories and draining their life-energies before discarding the used-up "shells." Unfortunately, one of Proteus's victims was Blink's boyfriend, MIMIC. And now Proteus has claimed the body of yet another founding member of the Exiles team, MORPH.

That latest acquisition changes everything for Proteus. Unlike every shell he has stolen in the past, Morph's transmutable, shape-shifting physiology will never wear out. It also allows Proteus to assume whatever look he desires—very useful for a mutant serial killer. Proteus decides to keep Morph's body and he warps space-time to return to his home reality. But he's in for a surprise when he arrives...



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MAGNUS. T-BIRD. SUNFIRE. MAGIK. NAMORA.

FROM THE START, THE LIST OF FALLEN EXILES JUST GOT LONGER AND LONGER.

THEN ***PROTEUS*** DRAINED THE LIFE OUT OF THE MAN I ***LOVED***. I TRIED TO CARRY ON, BUT CAL'S DEATH PUT ME IN A TAILSPIN.

EVEN AS WE HUNTED PROTEUS, I WAS DISTRACTED, FELT SORRY FOR MYSELF, AND FINALLY RELINQUISHED COMMAND TO POWER PRINCESS.

THAT LAST MISTAKE COST US ***MORPH***, TOO.

FAASSHH

NO MORE. I DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF GRIEF. PROTEUS IS OUT THERE AND WE HAVE ONE LAST CHANCE TO GET IT RIGHT.

COME ON!

HEATHER! WHERE IS HE ***NOW?***

EARTH SIX-ONE-SIX. ***SORT OF.***

PROTEUS TRIED TO WARP BACK HOME, BUT I HAD A ***CONTINGENCY PLAN*** READY, AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE FELL FOR IT...

REALITY #616

SWEET MOTHER O' MERCY! WHAT HAPPENED WHILE I WAS AWAY?!

WORLD TOUR

HEROES REBORN

PART 1 OF 2

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"IN REALITY SIX-ONE-SIX, THERE'S A *DUPLICATE* EARTH ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SUN FROM THE *REAL* ONE.

"LONG STORY HOW THAT HAPPENED. I'LL STICK TO THE POINT FOR NOW...

PLOOSH

"...AS PROTEUS RE-ENTERED HIS DIMENSION, I USED THE EQUIPMENT HERE TO *CONFUSE* HIS SENSE OF DIRECTION.

"HE MATERIALIZED ON *COUNTER-EARTH*, THINKING HE WAS HOME.

"BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG HE'LL STAY FOOLED.

"PROTEUS STOLE MORPH'S *MEMORIES* ALONG WITH HIS BODY--HE KNOWS HIS OLD REALITY WAS *REMADE* INTO SOMETHING NEW.

"BUT THIS WATER-WORLD SCENARIO *ISN'T* WHAT REPLACED THE *HOUSE OF M*. HE'S GOING TO BE LOOKING FOR ANSWERS."

YOU HAD A CONTINGENCY PLAN YOU NEVER *TOLD* ME ABOUT?

SORRY, BLINK. COULDN'T RISK PROTEUS SNATCHING *YOUR* BODY AND FINDING OUT.

BUT...DUMPING HIM ON THIS COUNTER-EARTH ISN'T EXACTLY FAIR TO THE PEOPLE WHO *LIVE* THERE!

THEIR WORLD'S ALREADY TAKEN A BEATING.

WE COULD THROW AN *H-BOMB* AT PROTEUS NOW AND NOT MESS IT UP MUCH WORSE.

WHY NOT SIMPLY REROUTE PROTEUS INTO THE *SUN?*

I COULD ONLY *CONFUSE* HIM, NOT CONTROL HIM. IF IT DIDN'T "FEEL" LIKE EARTH, HE WOULDN'T FALL FOR IT.

EVERYBODY *SHUT UP.* I'M SICK OF *DEBATING.*

I *KNOW* WHAT WE HAVE TO DO, BUT IT HAS TO HAPPEN BEFORE PROTEUS FIGURES OUT WHERE HE IS.

NEED I REMIND YOU THAT *I* LEAD THIS TEAM NOW?

I'M TAKING *BACK* THAT MISTAKE.

TRUST ME, POWER PRINCESS, I KNOW HOW WE CAN *END* THIS, AND A LOT WILL DEPEND ON *YOU.*

WHY'D YE ATTACK ME?

W-WE THOUGHT YOU WERE TRYING TO STOP US!

STOP YE FROM DOIN' WHAT?

IT'S...IT'S AROUND THE CORNER.

A MISSILE? I CANNAE IMAGINE WHAT'S LEFT TAE BLOW UP AROUND HERE.

UP THERE. ATTILAN.

YUIR TRYIN' TAE DESTROY YUIR OWN HOME?

NOT ATLANTIS. ATTILAN!

OOOKAY, YE'VE GOT TWO SECONDS TAE TELL ME WHO THAT IS UP THERE, AN' WHO SENT YE TAE SHOOT 'EM DOWN...

IT'S SORT OF A HAVEN FOR REFUGEES, OPERATED BY THE ***YOUNG ALLIES***, A GROUP TRYING TO MAKE COUNTER-EARTH ***LIVABLE*** AGAIN.

"YOUNG ALLIES"? MAYBE YOU SHOULD CATCH ME UP ON THE ***HISTORY*** OF THIS PLACE.

I'D RATHER RETHINK YER ***PLAN***, PUP. HEATHER WAS MORE ON TRACK WHEN SHE SAID TA ***NUKE*** THE JOINT.

I WASN'T ACTUALLY ***RECOMMENDING--***

NO, VICTOR. MORPH MAY BE LOST TO US, BUT THE FACT THAT PROTEUS CAN'T USE UP HIS BODY ACTUALLY GIVES US AN ***OPENING***, AND WE HAVE TO ***SEIZE*** IT.

SO IT'S "VICTOR" NOW. NO MORE "MISTER CREED"?

POWER PRINCESS AND SPIDER-MAN ARE ALREADY CARRYING OUT THEIR PART OF THE PLAN, SABRE-TOOTH. THE DIE IS ***CAST***.

I KNOW, LONGSHOT. I JUST WANNA CAST IT ***HARDER***.

HEATHER HUDSON! WE ARE LOSING VISUAL CONTACT!

I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE. PROTEUS IS USING HIS POWER TO JAM OUR RECEPTION SO WE CAN'T SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO.

THIS WON'T WORK IF WE CAN'T FIND HIM. CAN I ***COUNT*** ON YOU TO TRACK HIM ***DISCREETLY?***

LIKE YOU EVEN HAVETA ***ASK***.

I STILL DON'T LIKE IT. WE SHOULD'VE PICKED THE RENDEZVOUS POINT, NOT DORMA.

RIGHT. YOU TRY TELLING THE WARRIOR-QUEEN OF ATLANTIS WHAT TO DO.

ALL I'M SAYING IS, I DOUBT SHE'S SERIOUS ABOUT FORMING AN ALLIANCE. I MEAN, WHAT'S IN IT FOR HER?

I RECKON THIS DOES STINK OF AN AMBUSH.

DORMA PROMISED A STEADY SUPPLY OF FISH.

IF YOU HAVE OTHER IDEAS ON HOW TO FEED ALL THE PEOPLE WE'VE TAKEN ABOARD, I'M ALL EARS.

IS...IS THAT...?

NO WAY--!

KLANG

KLANG

SORRY, BUT I WANTED TAE BE SURE I HAD YUIR ATTENTION.

SEE, I CAUGHT SOME HOOLIGANS TRYING TAE FIRE THIS WEE *ATOM BOMB* UP YUIR *TAILPIPE*.

SHWUMPF

AW, CRUD. THAT FIRECRACKER'S *FROM ATLANTIS*, AIN'T IT?

AYE. THE SOLDIERS I TOOK IT FROM MENTIONED A QUEEN *DORMA*. NOT YUIR BIGGEST FAN, SO IT SEEMS.

WHO ARE *YOU*? HOW'D YOU GET THE STATUE TO *DO* THAT?

THE NAME'S *KEVIN MacTAGGERT*. I'M A MUTANT.

AN' I'VE COME TAE HELP YE AGAINST YUIR ENEMIES, IF YE'LL HELP ME AGAINST MINE.

C'MON, JUST LET ME KEEP *ONE* OF THESE? I HAVE A SPOT ALL PICKED OUT IN MY LIVING ROOM...

NEGATIVE, WHIZZER. EVERY LAST SCRAP OF *B-MOD* TECHNOLOGY MUST BE DESTROYED

=HH= NIGHTHAWK, YOU WOULDN'T KNOW A *JOKE* IF IT JUMPED UP AND BIT YOUR--

WHIZZER.

THAT'SWHAT *I* WASGONNASAY!

FASSSH

ZARDA?! I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU BACK SO SOON.

WHERE ARE THE *OTHERS?*

ROUNDING UP HOLDOUTS STILL LOYAL TO THE *GLOBAL DIRECTORATE.*

SO THESE ARE THE FAMOUS *BRAINWASHING CHAIRS...?*

BACK OFF, SPIDER-MAN. THAT EQUIPMENT'S STRICTLY OFF-LIMITS.

CHILLAX, PAL. YOU CAN'T BLAME A SCIENTIST FOR BEING CURIOUS.

ZARDA, WHAT HAPPENED? WHY ARE YOU BACK?

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, NIGHTHAWK. WE CAUGHT PROTEUS.

YOU NEVER WERE VERY GOOD AT TELLING A LIE.

YOU ALWAYS MAKE EVERYTHING SO DIFFICULT.

-UNGH-

IT'S PRIMO HARDWARE, BUT I THINK I CAN MODIFY IT LIKE BLINK WANTED.

QUICKLY, DOCTOR O'HARA. ONCE PROTEUS LEARNS THE TRUTH ABOUT WHERE HE IS, THE JIG IS UP.

"OKAY, THIS IS GONNA SOUND PRETTY **WEIRD**, BUT OUR WORLD WAS CREATED BY A SUPER-POWERFUL **SIX-YEAR-OLD** NAMED FRANKLIN RICHARDS.

"SEE, HE KNEW **HIS** WORLD'S HEROES WERE ABOUT TO GET KILLED, SO HE WHIPPED UP A **POCKET UNIVERSE** AND PUT 'EM THERE TO KEEP 'EM SAFE.

" COURSE, WE THOUGHT EVERYTHING WAS HOW IT'S **SUPPOSED** TO BE, AND THAT THESE WERE **OUR** HEROES.

"EVENTUALLY, WE LEARNED OUR EARTH WAS A REPLICA, AND THEY WENT BACK HOME. THEN THINGS AROUND HERE WENT **DOWNHILL** IN A HURRY.

"EARTHQUAKES, COSMIC STORMS, NUCLEAR WARS-- YOU NAME IT, WE SUFFERED IT. WHEN THE WORLD ENDS UP GETTING SAVED BY **DOCTOR DOOM**, YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE."

DOOM'S SOLUTION WAS TO YANK OUR EARTH *OUT* OF THAT UNSTABLE POCKET UNIVERSE AND INTO THE *REAL* ONE.

HE SET US OPPOSITE THE SUN FROM HIS EARTH, AND THEN HE WENT HOME. IT'S BEEN EVERY MAN FOR H.MSELF AROUND HERE EVER SINCE.

NOW WE GO AROUND TRYING TO HELP PEOPLE REBUILD AND TAKING ABOARD REFUGEES WHEN WE CAN.

I KNOW THIS IS ALL PRETTY *CONFUSING*...

NO, YE'VE STATED YUIR CASE QUITE CLEARLY. AN' IT'S FAR FROM THE STRANGEST THING I'VE SEEN.

IN FACT, YE'D BE AMAZED AT HOW MANY *OTHER* EARTHS I'VE BEEN TAE.

SO HOW DO WE STACK UP AGAINST THE OTHER *YOUNG ALLIES* OUT THERE?

ACTUALLY, YUIR THE *FIRST* GROUP I'VE MET GOIN' BY THAT MONIKER EACH WORLD HAS ITS OWN PECULIARITIES, Y'SEE...

THE EARTH I COME FROM, FOR INSTANCE. WE NEVER HAD *THIS* BLOKE.

WHAT'D YE *CALL* 'IM?

CAPTAIN AMERICA. AND PLEASE DON'T DO THAT. IT CREEPS ME OUT.

FANCIED THE BIG LAD DID YE?

JUST.. *DON'T*.

WHAT YOU SAID *EARLIER*...ABOUT OUR ENEMIES AND *YOURS*...?

RIGHT. MINE'LL ARRIVE SHORTLY, BUT IF WE RE CRAFTY WE CAN *PROTECT* ALL O' THEM POOR REFUGEES...

30 MINUTES LATER...

SPIDER-MAN AND THE PRINCESS BACK YET?

NEGATIVE, SABRETOOTH. O'HARA NEEDS A LITTLE LONGER TO RECONFIGURE THE HARDWARE.

HAVE YOU *LOCATED* HIM YET?

NAW. THIS PLACE IS *BIG*-- AN' *CROWDED* TO BOOT.

JUST BE READY TA BACK US UP, OKAY?

HE COULD BE ANY *ONE* OF THESE PEOPLE, SABRETOOTH.

DOESN'T MATTER WHAT HE *LOOKS* LIKE. HE CAN'T FOOL MY *NOSE*.

THEN YOU KNOW MORPH'S *SCENT*?

ACTUALLY, HE DOESN'T *HAVE* A SCENT. TO *ME*, THAT MAKES HIM STAND OUT LIKE A BLACK-AND-WHITE CHARACTER IN A COLOR MOVIE.

-SNFF-
-SNFF-

THERE

OKAY, HE WENT INSIDE A BUILDIN'...

HANG TIGHT.

WELL...?

SUCCESS!

HURRY. I DON'T KNOW IF THIS PLACE HAS A BACK--

--DOOOOOR...!

SHWUMPF

A TRAP!

WELCOME TO ATTILAN, Y'ALL!

HEY--!

SABRE-TOOTH!

YEAH, YEAH...

THRUNCH

=URK=

THAT ALL YOU GOT?

=AKH=

WHY ARE YOU PROTECTING A *MURDERER?*

SAYS THE GUY THROWING *KNIVES.*

THAT ONE IS THE REAL THREAT!

NOT ANYMORE.

KZAKKK

ARHHH!

LOOKS LIKE THEY GOT THEIR OWN TELEPORTER, ONLY SHE AIN'T PACKIN' SIX-SHOOTERS!

BLOONK

BLAM

HEY, PROTEUS! EAT THIS!

BLAM

BLAM

THWIP

BLAM

THINK, SPIDER-MAN--THE ONE MAN WHO CAN BOLLIX MY POWERS JUST GOT FRIED BY LIGHTNIN'...

SHREEENG

...SO I'M BACK TAE PLAYIN' GOD!

THOUGHT YE'D FOOL ME, DID YE?

THOUGHT YE'D BURY ME ON THIS SORRY EXCUSE FOR A WORLD?

WELL, YE WERE RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING--THIS IS OUR LAST BATTLE!

DID WE JUST PICK THE WRONG SIDE...?

HOW'D THEY EVER PUT HIM ON THE RUN?

YOU! YOU ARE THE ONE WE HAVE WAITED FOR!

WHO...?

WE ARE THE FACE OF ***ORDER*** AND ***CHAOS***. WE WATCH THIS WORLD TO JUDGE ITS FINAL FATE.

SKZZZ

SPAK

WHAT THE HELL WAS *THAT?!*

YOUR ARRIVAL HAS, AT LONG LAST, TIPPED THE COSMIC SCALES.

HOW VERY ***NICE*** FOR YE! NOW, IF YE DON'T MIND, I'M ***BUSY*** HERE!

COME. PLAY YOUR PART IN THIS WORLD'S ***JUDGMENT.***

BUGGER OFF!

YOU WILL COMPLY.

WH--?

HE'S GONE!

WHAT WAS THAT *THING* IN THE SKY? WHERE DID THEY ALL GO?

THAT WAS *O* AND *KAY*--THEY'RE USUALLY PART OF OUR TEAM, BUT...

THEY USUALLY DON'T ACT LIKE *THIS*.

THEY'RE USUALLY, LIKE, *OUR* SIZE.

ALWAYS YAMMERIN' ABOUT BEIN' SENT HERE TO JUDGE US, BUT NEVER REALLY *DOIN'* MUCH ABOUT IT.

I JUST TOOK TO *IGNORIN'* 'EM AFTER A WHILE, BUT...

THAT GUY... "KEVIN"...WE THOUGHT HE WAS JUST ANOTHER *SUPER-PERSON* PASSING THROUGH.

BUT THE THINGS HE *DID* TO YOU. AND HE *ENJOYED* IT--!

YOU AREN'T THE FIRST PEOPLE HE'S TALKED INTO THINKING *WE'RE* THE BAD GUYS.

VICTOR, ASK HEATHER TO LOCATE PROTEUS.

HEATHER, Y'HEAR THAT?

...

HEATHER...?

SOMEBODY TELL ME WHY WE CAN'T GET THE *LINK* BACK UP!

STATUS OF COUNTER-EARTH SIX-ONE-SIX IN FLUX.

ARTIFICIAL PLANET WAS ALWAYS DESTABILIZING FORCE.

ARRIVAL OF SUBJECT-PROTEUS IS TIPPING POINT.

MEANING?

TEMPORAL SCANNERS RECOMMEND *DESTRUCTION* OF COUNTER-EARTH.

NEXT: END OF THE ROAD